



FEDERAL SECURITY AGENCY  
U. S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

IN REPLYING, ADDRESS THE

Aug 2, 1940

Dear Joshua,

The news of the high efficiency of recombination in special cases is most exciting, & I've taken the liberty of passing it on to Van Niel & others here. I'm not sure I know exactly what is meant by "nearly 100%," but it sounds like a big step.

You are correct in concluding that we get fewer recombinants on plates than you, rather than more in the tubes. Yet, before you dismiss from your mind the possible significance of the findings, I'd like to add that the reason is not that our agar is too clean (i.e. with respect to the gr. req. of these strains). For we got identical results in agar slightly enriched with the requirements of the recombining strains. I didn't mention this earlier because it didn't seem to show anything interesting - that is, we originally set up the expt. to see whether traces of gr. factors would promote the appearance of recombinant prototrophs, as they do with U-V induced reversion prototrophs. They didn't, probably because the mutual syntrophism of the two strains, in their enormous

inocula; outweighed any effect of added traces.

I hope you enjoy Gordon Allen's visit, and will not let it keep you back from getting off soon to a cooler spot. I've urged him to stay on as long as you'll have him - but it's only fair to balance this pressure by urging you to feel no obligation to stay. It's so cool here that I feel like a stickler every time I write East.

The Novicks are here this month, & Gummy just came down for the weekend; Lucia may be coming there soon. I'm so enjoying the effortless pleasure of learning from Van Niel that I've postponed visiting Pasadena until the trip back East, early in Sept.

I hope you & Esther get a comfortable vacation. My regards to Gordon.

Fernie